

Digital Transition Effective June 12, 2009

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What's this all about?

A. By Federal Communications Commission regulation, broadcast TV stations will stop sending analog TV signals over the air by June 12, 2009. (Some stations may already be transmitting digital signals only, because stations had the option to change over at the original February 17 date.) To continue to receive local TV station broadcasts on an analog TV, your set must be connected to either cable TV or a digital receiver.

Q. Who is affected?

A. Viewers who now have an analog TV and get TV reception through a rooftop or "rabbit ears" antenna will need a converter box to change the digital broadcast signal into an analog signal that the TV can understand.

Q. Who *may be* affected?

A. Viewers who now have or buy a digital TV and continue to use a rooftop antenna may be able to get reception, but some stations' digital signals may not be received.

Q. Wait a minute: If I could receive a Sacramento station's analog signal before with my rooftop antenna, why might I not be able to get that station's digital signal?

A. There are at least three possible reasons:

- (1) Digital transmission is either "there" or "not there." A weak analog signal could give you a poor picture, but a weak digital signal may give you no picture at all. A better antenna might help, or might not.
- (2) Digital transmission is line-of-sight, so hills, trees or buildings may obscure the signal. Also, you might get multiple out-of-phase digital signals due to bouncing off buildings or land features.
- (3) Broadcasters may subdivide available channels for digital broadcasting, dedicating less bandwidth (a narrower "channel") for each signal.

Q. Who *is not* affected?

A. Viewers who now get TV reception through a cable system (e.g. Wave Broadband) or satellite dish. Cable TV systems must provide analog signals to their subscribers for at least three more years (to February 2012). If you are using a satellite dish service, you already have a digital TV or the necessary converter.

Q. How do I get a converter box? How much will it cost?

A. Many appliance and electronics retail stores sell the boxes, usually about \$50-\$70. The U.S. government will provide a \$40 coupon to defray the cost - up to two coupons per household. For more information about the availability of coupons and how to get them, call the Federal Communications Commission at 1 (800) 888-2009 or visit website www.DTV2009.gov.

Q. I want to stay with my analog TV and roof antenna, but I need help to hook up the converter box.

A. Many TV and other retail stores offer assistance (usually at a cost).

Q. What if I stop my cable or satellite dish service?

A. If you have a *digital TV*, you may be able to get reception using a rooftop antenna, but some stations' digital signals may not be strong enough to be received. If you have an *analog TV*, you may be able to get reception using a rooftop antenna and a converter box, but some stations' digital signals may not be strong enough to be received.